



ART LAB

A Curatorial Residency About Heritage and Horizons

*Naryn, Kyrgyz Republic
18-25 November 2024*

CONCEPT

Artists, curators and cultural managers from **Kyrgyzstan, France and Germany** are convening at an **art residency** in the mountainous city of **Naryn** (Kyrgyzstan).

This innovative art laboratory intends to explore the intersection of curatorship, art management, cultural heritage and creation. During the one-week art residency, participants will engage in workshops incorporating practice and reflection and confront points of view and ideas in order to question **the future of curatorship and residency in Kyrgyzstan**. During these sessions, participants will work with traditional techniques while infusing these techniques with contemporary meanings and forms. This “thinking while doing” process will enable attendees to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, fostering a deeper understanding of how art can play a role in cultural preservation and innovation. Merging experiences and innovations from Europe and Kyrgyzstan intends to bring new ideas for future residencies and the experience in Naryn will be a laboratory for these reflections.

This **Art Lab** is an artistic residency and a theoretical workshop at the same time. At the end of the residency, the outputs of the week’s creation and reflection will be presented in Bishkek, the capital city of Kyrgyzstan, at an exhibition and conference intending to forecast the future of residencies in the country.

This experimental project intends to be a vibrant exchange of ideas and practices, a pioneering event setting new perspectives, and an intense multicultural adventure.

About Naryn

Naryn, being part of the Silk Road, has historically absorbed materials, thoughts, and imagery from diverse cultures. Participants will have the opportunity to discover Kyrgyz traditional crafts, shaped and upheld over the centuries. Additionally, they will have the chance to meet with craftswomen, visit art institutions, and immerse themselves in the rhythms of Naryn by exploring its markets, strolling through its streets, hiking its mountains, and descending to Naryn river. This deep dive into the local culture intends to **foster cross-cultural creative work by artists from Kyrgyzstan, France and Germany**.



PARTNERS

University of Central Asia

The University of Central Asia (UCA) is a world-class centre for knowledge and learning, connecting isolated rural communities with the global community and building human capital needed for modern economies and stable governance. The mission of UCA is to promote the social and economic development of Central Asia, particularly its mountain communities, by offering an internationally recognised standard of higher education and enabling the peoples of the region to preserve their rich cultural heritage as assets for the future. In addition, UCA promotes broader commitment and partnership of the Aga Khan Development Network, one of the largest private development agencies in the world.

The UCA's Cultural Heritage and Humanities Unit (CHHU) advances the University's mission to help different peoples of the region preserve and draw upon their rich cultural traditions and heritage as assets for the future through research, documentation, teaching, and public outreach activities. CHHU works with a network of regional scholars and cultural practitioners to achieve its goals.

French-German Cultural Institute Project

Launched in 2021, the French-German Cultural Institute project in Kyrgyzstan is driven by the Embassy of France through **Alliance Française de Bichkek** and by the **Goethe-Institut Kirgistan**. Finding its roots in the Aix-la-Chapelle treaty, signed by President Macron and Chancellor Merkel in 2019, it intends to strengthen French-German's strategic partnership and embodies the values of reconciliation, cooperation and cultural exchanges, building new artistic and cultural bonds between France, Germany and Kyrgyzstan. The project relies on its institutional and artistic partnerships, encouraging new cooperation and the development of new cultural perspectives.

Its cultural programme gathers projects organised around three themes: cultural diversity, equality and environment. It stands out for its willingness to explore all cultural fields and create cooperation between creators, researchers and innovators in domains such as music, dance, video games, urban planning and comic strips – and, in this project, with residencies where art meets craftsmanship, cultural management and experimentation. This event will be the first project to be organised in the city of Naryn, thanks to the decisive partnership with UCA.

CONTACTS

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PROGRAMME

Pre-Residency Activities		
<p>Sunday, November 17</p>	<p>Arrival of international guests in Bishkek. Welcome meeting with organisers at the UCA office. City tour and visit to the Fine Arts Museum.</p>	<p>Tuiumkan Nishanova CHHU +996 509 220988</p>
<p>Monday, November 18</p>	<p>Travel from Bishkek to Naryn (6-hour drive through the scenic Kyrgyz mountains). <i>Stops:</i> Visit the Burana Tower and the Memorial to the Victims of 1916 in the Boom Gorge.</p>	<p>Tuiumkan Nishanova</p>
Art Lab Schedule		
<p>Tuesday, November 19</p> <p>UCA Campus</p>	<p>Morning: Opening and introduction to the Art Lab and introductions. A session of trust and sharing values of coexistence within a shared space throughout the week.</p> <p>Afternoon: Past to Present: The Story of Curatorship and Residencies in Kyrgyzstan. A session for delving into the theme of the art residency and exploring potential artworks and discussions to be held during the residency. Campus tour of UCA Naryn, featuring a meeting with the Associate Dean, Dr. Elmira Kochumkulova, and faculty members Dr. Lucy Palmer and Dr. Elena Kolesova.</p> <p>Evening: Group dinner and networking session.</p>	<p>Altyn Kapalova</p> <p>Tuiumkan Nishanova</p> <p>Altyn Kapalova</p> <p>Nurperi Orunbaeva Contemporary Artist, Curator, Founder of <i>kurjun_art</i></p> <p>Jibek Abylkasymova Facilities Manager of UCA Campus</p> <p>All group members</p>



<p>Wednesday, November 20</p>	<p>Morning: Presentations discussing curatorial experiences and sharing insights on curatorship in general.</p> <p>Afternoon: Presentations on the curatorial and art management experience. Workshop “Curatorial Practices and Cultural Heritage,” combined with a craft session on creating <i>tumars</i> (Kyrgyz traditional amulets).</p> <p>Sharing session: Participants present their ideas and inspirations.</p> <p>Evening: Group dinner and networking session.</p>	<p>Laura Mene Director of Espace Croisé Contemporary Art Centre in Roubaix, France</p> <p>Dr. Sandra Frimmel Art Historian and Research Coordinator at University of Zurich, Switzerland</p> <p>Gulzat Supataeva Naryn based Art Manager, Founder of the ‘Malbrett’ Art studio, Deputy Dean of the Naryn State University</p> <p>Nurzat Toktosunova Head of the Scientific and Methodological Department, Naryn Historical-Ethnographic Museum (NHEM)</p> <p>Nurjan Aman kyzy Leading Researcher at NHEM</p> <p>Gulnaz Niyazbekova Keeper at NHEM, Designer, Restorer</p> <p>Altyn Kapalova Nurperi Orunbaeva</p> <p>All group members</p>
<p>Thursday, November 21</p>	<p>Full Day: Rhythm of the Mountain City: A tour of Naryn, featuring visits to the bazaar, art gallery, Naryn State University, the mosque, the museum, the bridge, artist’s studios and a local café.</p> <p>Evening: Group dinner and networking session.</p>	<p>Gulzat Supataeva</p>



<p>Friday, November 22</p>	<p>Morning: Discussions in two groups: Group #1: “Future of Curatorship in Kyrgyzstan.” <i>Discussing vectors of growth, challenges and potential scenarios.</i></p> <p>Group #2: “Shaping the Future: Conversations on Art Residencies in Kyrgyzstan.” <i>Sharing Group Presentations.</i></p> <p>Afternoon: Session on women's traditional collective practices in Kyrgyz culture and feminist solidarity in art activism, followed by a hands-on workshop on creating Kyrgyz traditional dolls – <i>chii kuurchak</i>.</p> <p>Evening: Cultural night: sharing traditional music, dance, and food.</p>	<p>All group members</p> <p>Altyn Kapalova</p>
<p>Saturday, November 23</p>	<p>Full Day: Visit Dobolu village for a collective felt-making session with local craftswomen, accompanied by a lecture on Kyrgyz Craft History by Altyn Kapalova. The day will also include a hands-on workshop: “Integrating Traditional Techniques with Contemporary Art.”</p>	<p>Syiagul Urbaeva Director of the Dobolu Village Museum, craftswoman</p>
<p>Sunday, November 24</p>	<p>Morning: Embroidery workshop led by local craftswomen, along with collective work on the project 'Dastorkon' initiated and curated by Nurperi Orunbaeva.</p> <p>Afternoon: Work in small groups or individually.</p>	<p>Nurperi Orunbaeva</p>
<p>Monday, November 25</p>	<p>Morning: Summary of the entire art residency and preparation of the presentation for the final meeting.</p> <p>Afternoon: This will be planned based on the group's decision. A trip to Koshoy Korgon (a historical monument) is possible, with a stop at the confluence of the Eki-Naryn River tributaries.</p> <p>Evening: Closing dinner and reflections.</p>	<p>All group members</p>
<p>Tuesday, November 26</p>	<p>Morning: Return to Bishkek.</p> <p>Afternoon: Preparation for the final meeting – setting up the created works.</p>	



Post-Residency Activities

Wednesday,
November 27

Morning:

Preparation for the final meeting –
setting up the created works.

Afternoon:

Envisioning the Future of Curatorship and
Residencies in Kyrgyzstan:

1. Presentation of the theoretical outcomes;
2. Overview of each created work;
3. Q&A session with external participants.

Evening:

Goodbye party at Kuduk Art Centre.
Celebration and networking event.

